



USAID
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CROATIA

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Anti-Trafficking in Persons



A USAID sponsored workshop brought together members of the Croatian Government, Croatia's NGO sector and the international community to review the progress to date in combating trafficking in persons in Croatia. In July 2004, with USAID assistance, a working group was formed to draft a new national action plan that was provided to the Government of Croatia with concrete recommendations and an operational plan for 2005-2008. The Government approved the plan. Parliament adopted amendments to the Penal Code entitled Human Trafficking and Slavery, that took effect in October 2004.

Implementer (Capacity Building):
International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) and Women's Center ROSA

Partners: ABA/CEELI, US Embassy, Ministry of Justice, NGO Network "Petra", La Strada, Croatian Bar Association, National Committee for Suppression of Trafficking in Persons

Implementer (Anti-Trafficking Awareness):
International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Partners: National Committee for Suppression of Trafficking, Ministries, NGOs, print & electronic media, Embassies

U.S. Agency for International Development
www.usaid.gov

Project completed September 2004

Trafficking in persons (TIP) is one of the most profitable "black market" businesses in the region and operates through many routes. Croatia is positioned at the main transit route trafficking persons from eastern countries to prosperous Western Europe. Although Croatia is primarily a transit country, this serious problem must be acknowledged by the Government and prevented before it becomes even more severe. In response, USAID funded two projects:

The Anti-Trafficking Awareness Project increased public understanding of the impact and social costs of trafficking in persons through a public awareness campaign and training. This helped change perceptions and attitudes by putting a spotlight on the effects of trafficking on the community as a whole and by fostering compassion for the victims.

Capacity Building to Prevent Trafficking trained local NGOs and other government professionals as well as judges, prosecutors and lawyers that are directly involved in implementing TIP legislation. Croatian policy makers observed successful practices in dealing with TIP a USAID funded study tour to Macedonia. This resulted in the revision of the draft Trafficking in Persons provision in the penal code that stipulated prosecution of the victims' clients.

Results The public information campaign "*Trafficking in human beings is our reality. Let's stop!*" increased journalist's knowledge and awareness in over 80% of the population. Calls to the SOS line increased from 7 to 1500 calls after the campaign. Over 1.5 million people (25% of the population) were exposed to this USAID-funded campaign. NGOs in large cities helped distribute 1,750 posters, 20,000 leaflets, 5,000 stickers, 5,000 bookmarks, 7,000 pocket calendars, 10,000 postcards and 60 billboards. The campaign was awarded the best and the most comprehensive public campaign with the social impact in Croatia in 2003.

Legal experts, prosecutors, judges and lawyers were trained on legislative and judicial issues, including Croatia's obligations as a signatory of various international treaties. Post-training questionnaires indicated a greater understanding of general issues surrounding the phenomena of trafficking in persons as well as country and regional situations among legal experts and NGOs trained through this program. With USAID assistance, NGOs implemented counter-trafficking awareness and information campaigns according to their strategic plans. Three Trafficking in Persons newsletters were distributed to over 660 relevant international and local NGOs, international organizations and governmental institutions including Croatian Ministries and offices, foreign embassies, judges, lawyers and state attorneys.